



# SHIMMERING

**FORGE** | Connection Group Discussion Guide | Week 5

## Connect (5 to 10 minutes)

*Come together to build relationships through fellowship and sharing about this week's worship.*

- Take a few minutes to share your thoughts about worship this week.
  - What aspects of worship did or did not connect with you?
  - What story or illustration made an impact on you?
- Share about someone in your life that you would say is truly humble.

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## Context (30 to 40 minutes)

*Dig deeper into the videos and scripture for this week through questions and discussion.*

- If you read 1 Peter chapter 5 this week, share something that you connected with or any questions that came up because of your reading.
- *Watch the video for this session on your DVD or online.*
  - Allison shared that she thinks one of the ultimate teachings of 1 Peter is to embrace your purpose, no matter the circumstances. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
    - What other overarching themes or teachings have you found in 1 Peter? How do these connect with your faith?
    - What do you think the ultimate purpose of all Christians is? Why do you think this?
  - How do you respond to the metaphor used in the video of our faith as a marathon race or our faith being more like blacksmithing?
    - Share about a time when you have received an award of some kind. Do you think it is wrong to feel proud of your accomplishment? Why or why not?
    - Share about a time when you were not publicly recognized for something you did. How did you feel God moving through you in that time? How does this compare to a tangible award?
  - Do you see yourself as a tool that God can use? Why or why not?
    - What are some things you feel you need in order to be used more effectively by God?
    - Share about a time when God has used you and you weren't expecting it or did not feel prepared. How did God move through you despite your limitations?

- How do you respond to the definition of humility shared in the video: “an inside-out virtue produced by comparing ourselves to the Lord (rather than to others)”?
  - How do you struggle with comparing yourself to Christ or to other people?
  - What intimidates you about comparing yourself to Jesus?

### Read 1 Peter 5:1-5

Elders in the early church might have been an official title, or this could simply refer to those who helped lead and guide the church through their advice and actions. Those who were “younger” would be young Christians, but not necessarily younger in age.

- Do you see yourself as an elder or one of the younger ones in faith (not in age)? Why?
  - As a group, take time to share when you have served each other as elders through advice or action. Where have you seen God working through each other?
  - After sharing, how did it feel to hear from others that you have served as an elder for them? Does this change how you view yourself?
- When have you felt like a “younger one” in faith recently? Was it because of a lack of knowledge or experience?
  - Do you embrace “knowing what you don’t know,” or is this a more difficult posture for you? Why?

### Read 1 Peter 5:10-11

- How do you respond to this promise that the author gives to his readers?
  - Will this be easy or difficult for you to remember during times of hardship? How can you remind yourself of this promise?
- The author specifically says God will “restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.” Which of these four things do you need most right now? Why?
  - How can you open yourself up to receive these gifts from God?
  - Think for a moment. Where is God already doing these things for you in your life?
  - How can this group also offer what you need right now?

### Call (10 minutes)

*We believe that God not only shows us who God is but invites us to participate in God’s ministry by answering unique calls in our own lives. Join together in discovering how we can actively respond to scripture and God’s presence.*

- What “stage” of the process do you feel you’re in right now (being dug out, melting down, being purified, being forged or melded together, or being polished and sharpened)? Why?
- What is one teaching from this series that has been important for you?
  - How will you hold yourself accountable to this moving forward?
  - How can this group hold you accountable?

### Closing (5 minutes)

*God calls us into community by sharing our joys and concerns together in prayer and supporting one another in our walks with Christ. As we share testimony and stories of our lives, let us listen to where God is working within our community and how we can build each other up in Christian love.*

- Share joys and concerns with one another.
- Close in prayer, either by inviting a group member to pray or by using the prayer provided below.

### Closing Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we confess that so many times we fall into the trap of forgetting our purpose as Christians. We think too little of ourselves to serve as an “elder” for someone else, or we think too much of ourselves and forget we are called always to learn and grow as the “younger” in the faith. We are sorry. Help us to realize we are always being refined by Your grace, and help us embrace our purpose as tools for Your Kingdom in all that we do. Amen.